DAREDEVIL & ECHO

MARVEL

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TABOO
B. EARL
PHIL NOTO

noto

As a child, **Matt Murdock** lost his sight due to an accident involving radioactive chemicals. But that same accident caused his other senses to become heightened, and now Matt uses his extraordinary abilities to fight for justice as the vigilante **Daredevil**!

Born deaf, **Maya Lopez**, A.K.A. **Echo**, was raised by the criminal **Kingpin** after he murdered her father. Maya eventually rejected the Kingpin and became a super hero thanks to the photographic reflexes that allow her to duplicate any action that she has witnessed and make her an unparalleled hand-to-hand combatant.

Together, they are...

DAREDEVIL & ECHO

In 1835 Hell's Kitchen, reformed gang leader Tommy Murdock was held captive below his church by the parish priest and his followers, who claimed that Tommy must die to unleash a being called the Blind One. A mysterious woman named Creeping Death told Tommy he must sacrifice himself willingly so that she could pass through the portal to battle the Blind One.

In present day Hell's Kitchen, Daredevil and Echo encountered Demagoblin at the same church, now abandoned. After investigating, they learned that the Demagoblin is manipulating children in another effort to release the Blind One. When Daredevil and Echo followed Demagoblin's latest pawn, Leor, back to the church, they encountered the vengeful Ghost Rider!

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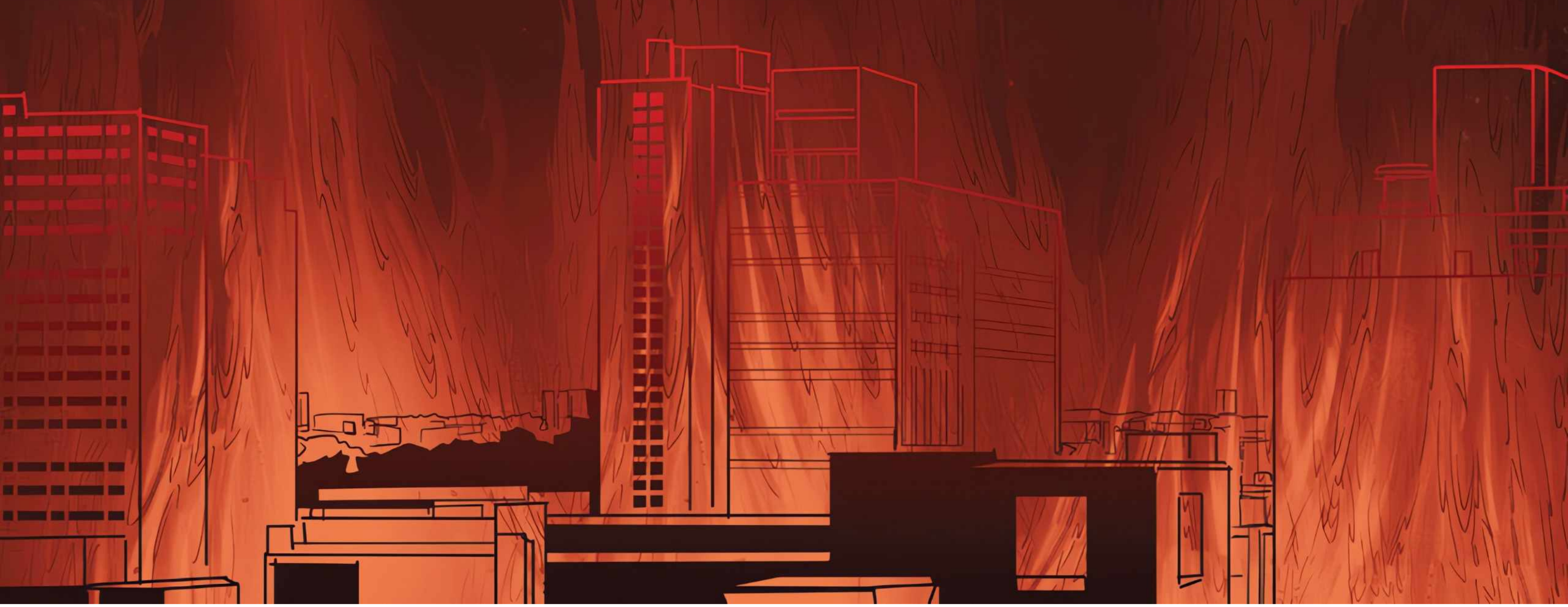

Life starts in blackness, grown in th' mother's womb.

Na seein', na hearin', na speakin' or feelin'...an' tha worst one of all, na tastin'.

But when ya come out kickin' and screamin', all those senses rush at ya like a locomotive.

And for tha rest of yer livin' days, every sense gives ya pleasure, pain, joy, sorrow an' everythin' in between.

Right now, I'm feelin' all of 'em wash over me like a black wave, bringin' me back to tha long voyage I made as a child. Mem'ries an' dreams mangled together, tellin' promises of freedom and opportunity.

But all I got was toil an' trouble.

Until I foun' ma' faith in God.

A Father I ne'er had...shown ta me by a priest who I believed.

I felt a sense a' peace I ne'er had felt before.

It's all I ever wanted...peace after all the fightin' and killin'.

But it was a lie.

The greatest betrayal is by the one you love.

I believed God was Love...but how could Love do this ta me?

I canna die now.

I have to kill tha one who betrayed me...I have to kill my priest.

1835.

WITH THIS BLADE, I CLEANSE YOU OF ORIGINAL SIN, TOMMY MURDOCK.

WITH THIS BLADE, I END ONE LIFE TO BEGET ANOTHER.

WITH THIS BLADE, I WELCOME THE *BLIND ONE* BACK TO CREATION.

YAAARRRGH!

BUT, FATHER, YA PROMISED US WEALTH BEYOND OUR WILD'ST DREAMS!

THIS SACRIFICE STANDS AS THE SYMBOL BRIDGING THE END AND THE BEGINNING!

WE ENTER A NEW PHASE...AN EVOLUTION OF HUMANITY INTO A PURER ENTITY, ONE MADE FROM THE VERY *FABRIC* OF THE UNIVERSE!

NOW.

THIS ISN'T YOUR FIGHT, DEVIL. YOU AND THE WOMAN NEED TO BACK OFF.

"THE WOMAN" IS NAMED *ECHO*, GHOST RIDER.

AND THERE'S SOMETHING *BIGGER* GOING ON HERE.

WE WON'T LET YOU HURT THE BOY. HE'S JUST A PAWN IN DEMAGOBLIN'S GAME.

DEMAGOBLIN. I KNEW I SMELLED HER BRIMSTONE. ALL THE MORE REASON TO SEND THESE DEMONS STRAIGHT BACK TO HELL!

YOU DON'T HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO GET THIS KIND OF JOB DONE.

THE BOY! HE'S *GONE!*

AND *THIS* IS WHY I DON'T WORK WITH AMATEURS!

Ghost Rider's confidence borders on arrogance.

But I know he's one of the best when it comes to demons and the occult.

THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO TELL YOU, ECHO.

IT'S HARD TO READ YOUR LIPS MID-AIR, RED.

SORRY.

WAIT UNTIL WE LAND.

As we're dragged down, I wonder if Fate has woven Echo and myself together...

I THINK OUR RELATIVES WERE CONNECTED TO THIS CHURCH MANY YEARS AGO.

SO YOU'RE SAYING THIS IS A SET-UP?

...bringing us to this church where our ancestors were last seen.

RIDER!

YOU BRING ME THE DEVIL AND THE DEAF ONE.

I ONLY NEEDED ONE, BUT I APPRECIATE YOUR OFFERING.

The little girl from before... along with the boy and two others!

All along, this was a trap, but we didn't see it. We were so focused on saving these children and stopping the murders.

I CANNOT SPEAK FOR THESE TWO HITCHHIKERS, BUT IT'S TIME FOR ME TO DRAG YOU BACK TO HELL!

LESS TALK...

THUNK

...MORE ACTION.

ECHO...THE HEART!

GOT IT, RED.

YOU HAVE MADE A GRAVE MISTAKE, FALSE DEVIL!

IT WILL BE YOUR HEART THAT BLEEDS THIS DAY.

I WILL MAKE SURE THAT YOU ARE THE SACRIFICE WHO BEGETS THE BLIND ONE!

MMMMMMMMMMHHHHAWWWWAAAAAMMMMMWWWAHH

MY CHILDREN WILL HELP RESHAPE THIS WORLD INTO A MORE JUST PLACE...

KRAKKKKHHH

...ONE WHERE INNOCENCE REIGNS, WHILE CORRUPTION SUCH AS YOURS WILL BE BUT A STAIN ON AN ANCIENT MEMORY...

...BURIED IN SOME LONG-FORGOTTEN TOMB!

ARROGANCE AND EGO HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A DEMON'S WEAKNESS.

RUMBLE

DAMN IT!

1835.

YOU MAY NOT SEE IT NOW, BUT YOUR DEATH WILL BRING ABOUT A BETTER TOMORROW!

I TRUSTED YA, FATHER.

BUT YA BROKE MA HEART TONIGHT.

HNNNNNH! TOMMMMMYYY...

THUNK

THROW ME THE BLADE, TOMMY!

IT'S THE ONLY WAY I CAN SEAL THE BLIND ONE BACK IN ITS DOMAIN!

AN' THE ONLY WAY AH CAN MAKE IT RIGHT...

...IS BY ENDIN' YA AND YER LIES!

HEEEE...

...CHAAAAA!

THERE IS ALWAYS AN ECHO.

WHA' DOES IT MEAN?

DON'T LISTEN TO IT.

THE ECHOES VIBRATE. INVISIBLE NO MORE.

THE LITTLE GIRL MADE A CHOICE. THE IMAGES GROW. MY MIND IS CONNECTED TO THE SMALLEST ATOM, BUT ALSO THE LARGEST GALAXY.

THE UNIVERSE IS BOTH INFINITE AND FINITE. A MOMENT IS ETERNITY.

IT WILL TRICK YOU INTO THE LIE.

WE MUST SHATTER THE ALTAR TO BREAK THE CONNECTION.

BUT WHAT IF AH DIE WILLIN'LY NOW?

IT'S TOO LATE, TOMMY.

THE TIME HAS PASSED.

WE CAN ONLY PAUSE WHAT WILL HAVE TO REPEAT.

HNNNNNHHHH.

LET THE -KAFF- BLIND ONE -KAFF- THROUGH, TOMMY.

WE HAVE BEEN DECEIVED THIS WHOLE TIME -KAFF- -KAFF- WORSHIPPING ON AN ALTAR TO A GOD WHO IGNORES OUR SUFFERING.

NOW.

GET THE HEART, MY CHILDREN!

WITH IT IN PLACE, I WILL BE ABLE TO ACTIVATE THE GATE WITHOUT ALL THE POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE.

THE TIME FOR THE BLIND ONE TO RETURN IS *NOW!*

NOT ON MY WATCH, DEMON!

I'LL GET THE HEART, RIDER. BUT YOU NEED TO KEEP DEMAGOBLIN OFF ME!

THE *CORRUPTIONS* THAT MASQUERADE AS *CHANGE* MUST BE PURGED IN A MONUMENTAL BLAZE!

DON'T PREACH TO ME ABOUT BLAZES, DEMON!

YOUR MISGUIDED VIEW OF OUR IMPERFECT WORLD CAN BURN WITH YOUR ROTTED CARCASS.

I HAVE THE HEART, ECHO!

SKREEEEEEEEEE!

UNGH!

NOOOO! RED!

SKREEEEEEEEEE!

OOOOOFFFFF!

FOOL! YOUR CHAINS WILL NOT TAKE ME AGAIN.

I AM MORE POWERFUL NOW THAN EVER, BOUND TO SHRIEK AND BLESSED WITH NEW PURPOSE--GIVEN BY AN ANCIENT ENTITY OLDER THAN TIME ITSELF!*

*IT HAPPENED IN ABSOLUTE CARNAGE: LETHAL PROTECTORS #1! --AB

ALL RIGHT, KID.

HAND OVER THE HEART!

THNK

SHKK

THWOOOOOMMM

1835.

SMASH THE ALTAR!

AND DO NOT LET THE BLIND ONE CONFUSE YOU!

WISE MAN GUIDED THEM TO A SANCTUARY FAR FROM HOME-- RUINS IN AN ANCIENT LAND WHERE THEY COULD GROW TOGETHER.

I WILL NA' FAIL YA' THIS TIME, CREEPING DEATH.

HEEEEECHAAAAA!

TIME IS A STRANGE ENTITY.

THIS **ROCK** IS BOTH THE BEGINNING AND THE **END.** IT HOLDS THE PATTERNS CONNECTED TO NATURE. THE PATTERNS KEEP REPEATING WITH EACH ITERATION.

HNNNNHH.

WE ARE LIVING A LIE. -KAFF- ONE THAT **CAN** BE CORRECTED.

GRRNRNNNNN.

I CAN NE'ER FORGIVE YA, FATHER.

I'M GONNA KILL TWO EVILS WITH THIS ONE STONE.

HNNNNNNNNNNRRRRNNN!

CRUNCH

RRRRRAAAAGGGHHHHH!

WHAM

I AM THE RAGE OF A DEAD WORLD!

I COMMEND YA TA ALMIGHTY GOD, ENTRUST YA TA YER CREATOR.

MAY YA RETURN TO HIM WHO FORMED YE FROM THA DUST OF THA EARTH.

AAHHHH!

THE CHOICES YOU BEGIN WITH OUTNUMBER THE ATOMS IN OUR KNOWN UNIVERSE. I WILL RETURN WHEN THE SPHERES ALIGN.

MAY ALMIGHTY GOD HAVE MERCY ON ME, PARDON AND DELIVER ME FROM ALL MY SINS. IN JESUS' NAME, AMEN.

NO... PLEASE...

EVERYTHING IS NOTHING... AND NOTHING IS EVERYTHING.

NOW.

WHO WILL DIE TONIGHT?

PERHAPS I SHOULD LET MY CHILDREN OF THE APOCALYPSE CHOOSE?

NO ONE WILL BE DYING TONIGHT, DEMAGOBLIN!

SPEAK FOR YOURSELF, DAREDEVIL.

MAYA!

CREEPING DEATH?! YOU ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE HERE.

I AM SUPPOSED TO BE HERE...AND SO ARE YOU.

JUST AS MY DESCENDANT IS *SUPPOSED* TO USE THIS BLADE.

IT IS TIME TO COMPLETE WHAT WAS STARTED SO MANY YEARS AGO.

SO THIS IS WHAT RED MEANT ABOUT OUR ANCESTORS?

I CANNOT LET YOUR INTERFERENCE STOP THE SUMMONING!

BUT WE CAN!

THIS SHOULD LEAVE A MARK!

ARRGGGHHH!

THE RED DEVIL MUST BE WILLINGLY SACRIFICED ON THE ALTAR.

ONLY THEN DO WE HAVE A CHANCE TO STOP THE BLIND ONE.

ARE YOU JOKING?!

YOUR ANCESTOR TOMMY WAS NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO MAKE THE SACRIFICE.

HE ONLY PROLONGED THE INEVITABLE.

BUT I BELIEVE THAT *YOU* ARE THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR.

THAT'S WHAT THEY SAY.

We are taught that God is love. And that when we love, we become one with God.

IF YOU SUCCEED, I WILL SEE YOU ON THE OTHER SIDE!

Perhaps being the willing sacrifice is the ultimate act of love. To be honest, I never thought I would die this way. But if this is what must be done, I do it with love.

YOU'RE SURE ABOUT THIS, RED?

As I look up into Echo's eyes, a wave of guilt washes over me...I know deep down that I'm not a savior.

DO IT BEFORE I CHANGE MY MIND.

HHHHRNNNNNN!

I'm the *Devil* of Hell's Kitchen!

TO BE CONCLUDED!

Daredevil and Echo face not only the nefarious **Demagoblin**, but also a bigger, wilder and much, much, MUCH older enemy--one that has had its hooks in Hell's Kitchen for generations. This dark night of the soul will ask--will DEMAND--what our heroes are willing to give to stop all-consuming evil!

Email us at MHEROES@MARVEL.COM and mark your messages "okay to print" for a chance to see them answered in future issues!